



April 15, 2019

Dear Cleveland City Council Member,

The City of Cleveland continues to have devastating lead poisoning crisis that is harming the children of our neighborhoods as each day goes by.

The Cleveland Lead Advocates for Safe Housing (CLASH) members are attending the City Council meeting tonight to express our strong opposition to the decision this past Friday, April 12th by Council Clerk Pat Britt, and the public statement of support of her decision by Council President Kevin Kelley. Under that decision, Clerk Britt refused to provide a certificate of validity for **6,530 valid citizen signatures** confirmed by the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (BOE) in an April 9th letter to Clerk Britt. Even though the validated signature count exceeded the 5,000 signatures required by the Chapter 7 of the City Charter, Clerk Britt has refused to submit the proposed CLASH ordinance to Council as the Charter envisions.

The Clerk's actions disrespect the City Charter and dismiss the voices of thousands of Cleveland citizens who signed the petition to help address Cleveland's lead crisis.

CLASH agrees that the petitions lacked the 13-word sentence required under state election law. However, state law does not override the Charter, which states that a proposed ordinance first be submitted to council upon a certification of 5,000 valid signatures. The lack of the 13-word sentence is only a concern if the bill is not passed by City Council. And, as the BOE said publicly, the BOE does not decide when and how City Council reviews proposals under its City Charter.

WE ASK THAT YOU SUPPORT THE FULL AND COMPLETE REVIEW AND VOTE BY CITY COUNCIL OF THE LEAD SAFE PROPOSAL SPONSORED BY CLASH AND SUPPORTED BY OVER 10,000 CITIZENS. WE ALSO ASK FOR YOUR SPONSORSHIP OF THE PROPOSAL WITH AN UNEQUIVOCAL COMMITMENT TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS AND AN EVENTUAL VOTE BY THE FULL CITY COUNCIL.

There's a growing nation- and state-wide consensus on the best way to address lead poisoning: preventative screenings in homes. City Council has an opportunity to pass this historic and desperately needed lead safe housing legislation. CLASH wants to work with Council to solve this terrible public health crisis in our city's neighborhoods. Meanwhile we will go to court to enforce the City Charter requirement of a 90-day public review and vote on our proposal. We will not allow the voice of our citizens to be silenced. Thank you.